

Amendments to the Specification:

Please amend the first paragraph on page 1 as follows:

This is a continuation of U.S. Patent Application No. 09/810,557, filed March 19, 2001, now U.S. Patent No. 6,734,334, which is herein incorporated by reference in its entirety.

Please amend paragraph [0080] on page 30 as follows:

In step 224, a covering is formed on the immobilizing mineral. Step 224 may be achieved by cooling the product of step 222 to about 25°C, producing a high-density ceramic in which crystals of the immobilizing mineral containing the one or more of radionuclides, hazardous elements, and hazardous compounds are surrounded by crystals of the immobilizing mineral which do not contain any or only a very low concentration of radionuclides, hazardous elements, or hazardous compounds.

Please amend paragraph [0147] on page 64 as follows:

1. Mixing simulation of waste composition with simulation of radionuclides (found in the waste) Same as in ~~Example 5~~ Example 6, except that one weight % of each ThO₂, UO₂, CeO₃ and La₂O₃ were added to simulate a typical waste composition from Idaho Falls site in the State of Idaho in the United States.